

Protocol Data Unit Prioritization in a Data Processing Network

## ABSTRACT

5 A data processing network and an associated method of prioritizing protocol data units (PDU) is disclosed. The network typically comprises a first server including a first network interface card (NIC) that connects the first server to a central switch and a second server including a second NIC that connects the second server to the switch. The second server NIC receives management PDUs from the first server and application PDUs from an external network. The NIC may be configured to interpret priority information in the management and  
10 application PDUs and enabled to prioritize interrupts to a host processor of the second server based upon the priority information. The management PDUs may be generated at a low level of the network's communication protocol stack. The application PDUs are typically TCP/IP compliant while the management PDUs are generated at a data link level of the stack.

15